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Research Article

New data on spiders (Arthropoda, Arachnida, Araneae) of Georgia with description of a new species from *Tegenaria lyncea* group

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Abstract

In this paper we present new faunistic and regional data on the Agelenidae, Gnaphosidae, Linyphiidae, and Lycosidae of Georgia. *Tegenaria hasperi* Chyzer, 1897 (Agelenidae), *Archaraeoncus prospiciens* (Thorell, 1875), *Trichoncoides piscator* (Simon, 1884) (both Linyphiidae), and *Aulonia kratochvili* Dunin, Buchar & Absolon, 1986 (Lycosidae) are reported for the first time from Georgia. *Echemus levyi* Kovblyuk & Seyyar, 2009 (Gnaphosidae) is reported for the first time from the Caucasus region. *Tegenaria pseudolyncea* (Guseinov, Marusik & Koponen, 2005) (Agelenidae) is documented in Georgia outside the Samachablo region for the first time. *Marinarozelotes malkini* (Platnick & Murphy, 1984) (Gnaphosidae) is recorded in the Southern Caucasus for the second time. Lastly, a new species from the *Tegenaria lyncea* group, *T. amirani* **sp**. **nov**. is described based on both male and female specimens from Georgia. Diagnostic illustrations, photographs of a live *T. hasperi* female, and images of *T. amirani* **sp**. **nov**. are provided along with detailed collecting data.

Key words: Agelenidae, biodiversity, Gnaphosidae, Linyphiidae, Lycosidae, new species, new record, South Caucasus

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Introduction

Located at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, the Caucasus region is one of the world's 36 recognised biodiversity hotspots. Despite its favourable geographical location, vast array of landscapes, and a research tradition in arachnology spanning more than 150 years (Marusik et al. 2005), the ecoregion's fauna currently includes only ca. 1200 spider species (Otto 2022). The gap in the study of spiders from the Caucasus is evident, when you consider the ability of many spider species to disperse over long distances (Tarkhnishvili et al. 2024), and becomes even more apparent when compared to the spider diversity of European countries with smaller or similarly-sized land areas within the same latitudinal range. For instance, Greece hosts 1223 species, Italy 1587, Germany 1014, Spain 1414, and France 1601 (Nentwig et al. 2025). For a long time, Georgia remained one of the least-studied countries, with only 627 species recorded up until 2023, compared to 725 species in neighbouring Azerbaijan (Zarikyan

et al. 2023). Recently, the situation has begun to change; a growing number of publications have documented new records and species descriptions using both classical and integrative taxonomic approaches (Deltshev et al. 2023; Seropian et al. 2023a, b; 2024a, b, c; Seropian and Mumladze 2024; Seropian 2024; Zamani and Marusik 2024; Zamani et al. 2024). As a result, the number of species recorded in Georgia has risen to roughly 800 (Nentwig et al. 2025). It is worth noting that non-arachnologists and "citizen scientists" have played a key role in the collection of some of these valuable records. As a result of these publications, Georgia currently now holds the leading position in terms of spider species diversity among the countries of the South Caucasus (Nentwig et al. 2025). However, SE Georgia still needs further active research. The aims of this study are twofold: 1) describe a new species from *Tegenaria lyncea* group; 2) provide a list of new and interesting country and regional records.

Material and methods

The studied material was collected in different parts of Georgia. Samples were collected individually, except the Linyphiidae, obtained via flagging. Sampling details are given below. The elevations and GPS coordinates (given in WGS84) were obtained via Garmin GPS MAP 64s. Collected specimens were preserved in 96% ethanol and stored in a freezer at -22 ˚C at the scientific collections of Ilia State University (Georgia, Tbilisi). Identification was carried out by the corresponding author using literature sources on Caucasian spiders (see list in Otto 2022) as well as Nentwig et al. (2025), WSC (2025), and sources listed therein. Spiders were identified and measured under a Zeiss Stemi 508 Stereo Microscope with 8:1 Zoom and a Zeiss Apo 1.5x FWD 53 mm front lens. Drawings were made by the corresponding author based on microscope photographs using a Wacom CTH-690 Intuos Medium Pen and Touch Tablet with the programs Krita (version 2.9.7) and Photoshop CS6 (version 13.0). Drawings show the left male palpus, the female epigyne, and the endogyne; perspective and scale bars are given in the plates and their captions. Specimens were photographed using a Canon EOS 90D camera paired with a Canon EF 60 mm f/2.8 Macro USM lens and a Canon Macro Twin Lite MT-26EX-RT flash system. Digital images were stacked using Zerene Stacker image stacking software and later processed in Adobe Photoshop CS6 (version 13.0). The female epigyne and endogyne were prepared using a 10% potassium hydroxide (KOH) solution.

Abbreviations

Mun – municipality;
Vill – village;
Fe – femur;
Mt – metatarsus;
Pa – patella;
Ta – tarsus;
Ti – tibia;
CP – prolateral arm of conductor;
Cs – stem of conductor;
Em – embolus;
DB – dorsal branch;
MA – median apophysis;
VB – ventral branch;
MP – median plate;
RTA – retrolateral tibial apophysis;
EO – epigynal opening;
TR – terminal receptacula.

Results

Taxonomy

In total, 28 spiders, including 16 males and 12 females, collected during the sampling period were examined, comprising 7 species from 5 genera and 4 families. The list below is given in alphabetical order. Species marked with an asterisk (*) are reported from Georgia for the first time, while those marked with a double asterisk (**) represent new records in the Caucasus region.

List of spider species recorded

Family Agelenidae C. L. Koch, 1837

Genus *Tegenaria* Latreille, 1804

Comments. *Tegenaria* is the most speciose genus of Tegenariini Lehtinen, 1967 spiders, currently encompassing 138 valid species, mostly diversified in the Mediterranean region (WSC 2025). In its current composition, the genus is probably not monophyletic (Bolzern et al. 2013). To date, 32 species have been recorded in the Caucasus, with two recently described from Armenia and Georgia (Zamani et al. 2024).

***Tegenaria amirani* Seropian, Bulbulashvili et Makharadze, sp. nov.**
https://zoobank.org/04CA32B8-26D5-47DC-BD33-2D027DB2B028
Figs 1–9

Type material. Holotype ♂ (CaBOL-ID 1009928): Georgia: Shida Kartli, Gori, Kvernaki ridge; 41.9927°N, 44.1352°E; 705 m a.s.l.; heathland, S exposed dry rocky slope; leg. N. Bulbulashvili; 30 Jun. 2024. Paratypes. 1♀ (CaBOL-ID 1009929): same data; leg. G. Makharadze. 1♂ (CaBOL-ID 1020867): Tbilisi, Dighomi Vill.; 41.7796°N, 44.6995°E; 724 m a.s.l.; heathland, dry rocky slope; leg. A. Seropian; 2 June 2023.

Diagnosis. The new species belongs to the *lyncea* species group, defined by Brignoli (1978), in having a hammer-shaped conductor with pronounced pro- and retrolateral branches. Males of *Tegenaria amirani* **sp. nov.** are similar to those of *T. podoprygorai* (Kovblyuk, 2006) and *T. terskovi* Ponomarev, 2023, from which they are distinguished by median (=tegular) apophysis (MA) positioned at ca. 12–1 o'clock (Figs 1, 3) [vs. originating at ca. 3 o'clock (Kovblyuk 2006: fig. 3; Ponomarev and Shmatko 2023: figs 1–2)], tip of conductor with ventral branch shorter than dorsal (Figs 2, 4) [vs. longer (Kovblyuk 2006: figs 1–3; Ponomarev and Shmatko 2023: figs 1–2)], and differently shaped retrolateral tibial apophysis (Figs 1, 4–5). By the conformation of epigyne, female of the new species is similar to that of *T. pseudolyncea* (Guseinov, Marusik & Koponen, 2005), from which it can be distinguished by having general sternal pattern [vs. uniformly brown (Guseinov et al. 2005: 167)], terminal receptacula (TR) separated ca. by its diameter (Figs 6–7) [vs. separated ca. by 2× its diameter (Guseinov et al. 2005: figs 61–62; Ponomarev et al. 2024: figs 49–50)], and overall smaller body size (5.42 vs. 7.6; Guseinov et al. 2005: 168).

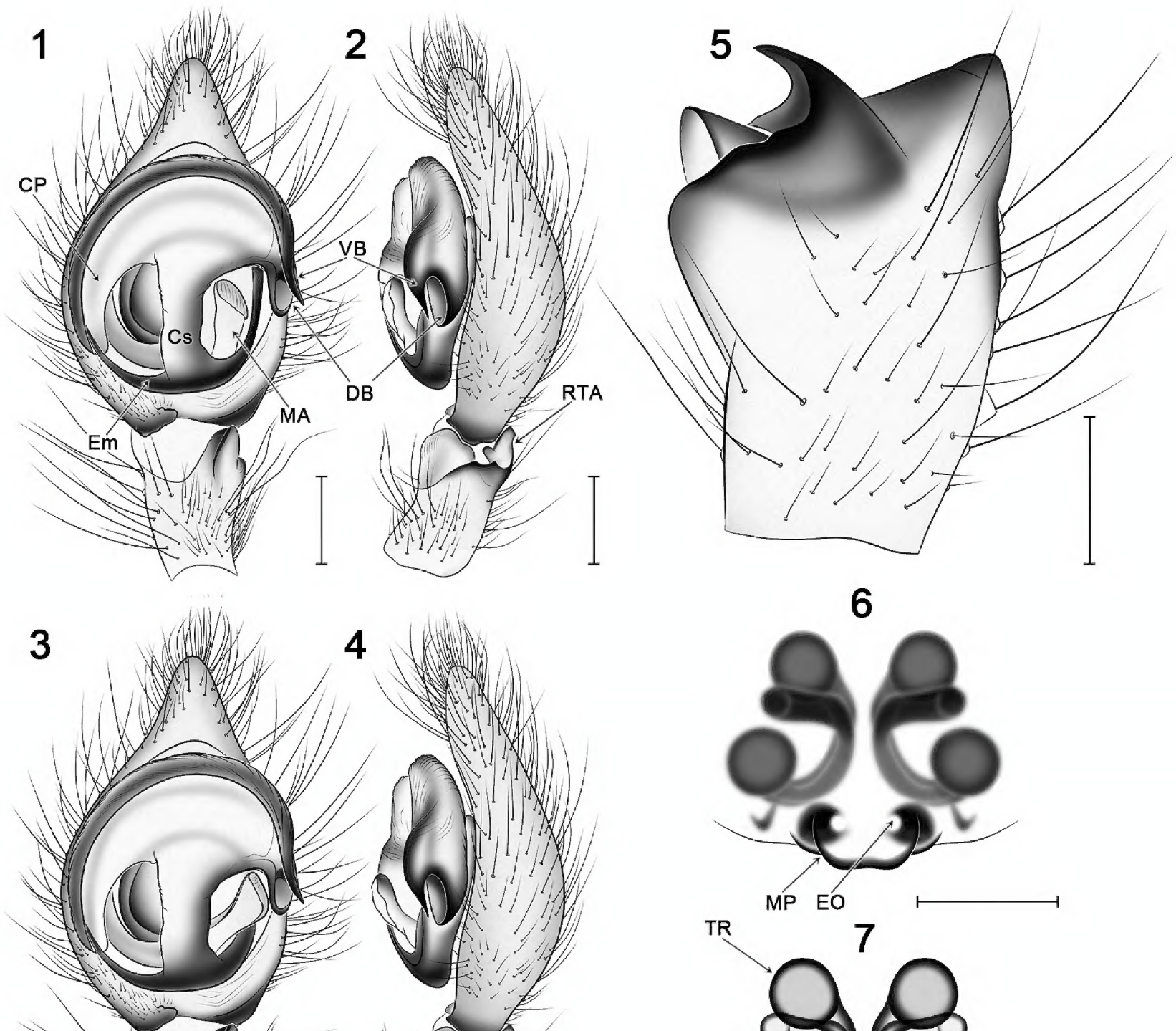

Figure 1–9. *Tegenaria amirani* sp. nov. (**1**: holotype male, left palp, ventral view; **2**: ditto, retrolateral view; **3**: paratype male, left palp, ventral view; **4**: ditto, retrolateral view; **5**: RTA, dorsal view; **6**: female, epigyne, ventral view; **7**: endogyne, dorsal view; **8**: holotype male, dorsal view; **9**: male, ditto). Abbreviations: RTA – retrolateral tibial apophysis, CP – prolateral arm of conductor, Cs – stem of conductor, Em – embolus, DB – dorsal branch, MA – median apophysis, VB – ventral branch, MP – median plate, EO – epigynal opening, TR – terminal receptacula. Scale bars: 0.2 mm (1–4, 6–7); 0.1 mm (5); 2 mm (8–9).

Table 1. Length of leg measurements.

	Fe	Pa	Ti	Mt	Ta	Total
I	3.42/2.75	1.08/1.15	2.72/2.22	3.25/3.08	1.61/1.33	12.08/10.53
II	2.65/2.48	1.03/1.02	2.19/1.72	2.44/1.76	1.30/1.11	9.61/8.09
III	2.58/2.03	0.95/0.87	1.88/1.45	2.31/1.94	1.14/0.90	8.86/7.19
IV	3.33/3.45	1.05/1.17	2.70/2.78	3.22/3.64	1.23/1.65	11.53/12.69

Description. Male (holotype). Total length 5.35. Carapace 2.61 long, 1.95 wide. Chelicerae red-brown, 1.28 long, with 4 pro- and 4 retromarginal teeth. Carapace light reddish; pars cephalica darker, with thin, dark median line; pars thoracica lighter, with uneven darker radiating pattern. Abdominal pattern as in Fig. 8. Sternum light reddish, with typical darker pattern. Spinnerets light grey; basal segment of anterior spinnerets darker. Legs yellowish, with darker coxae; coxae and femora with ventral dark grey spots. Leg measurements as in Table 1. Palpal structure as in Figs 1–5: femur ca. 1.6× longer than tibia and patella together, patella subequal in length to tibia; tibia ca. 1.4× longer than wide, apophysis with 2 pointy arms; cymbium ca. 1.6× longer than wide, with tip ca. 1/5 of cymbial length, bulb almost as long as wide, tegulum oval, not extending beyond conductor, median apophysis (MA) short, thinner than conductor stem (CS); conductor large with longer prolateral arm; embolus long, originating at ca. 6 o'clock, mostly hidden under conductor flap.

Variation. Males (n=2). Total length 5.35–5.42. Carapace 2.61–2.63 long, 1.95–1.96 wide. Female (paratype). Total length 5.42. Carapace 2.65 long, 2.11 wide. Chelicerae light brown, 1.05 long, with 4 pro- and 4 retromarginal teeth. Coloration as in males, with lighter carapace, chelicerae, and coxae; coxae with ventral dark grey spots. Leg measurements as in Table 1. Epigyne and endogyne as in Figs 6–7. Epigynal plate slightly extends epigastric furrow, with distinct round receptacula and dark transverse duct visible; nipples absent. Endogyne with two pairs of round receptacula, connected by long duct; terminal receptacula separated from each other ca. its diameter.

Etymology. Named after Amirani, a cultural hero from Georgian mythology, chained to a rock as punishment for stealing fire and gifting it to humanity, in a reference to the rocky outcrops the new species inhabits; noun in apposition.

Habitat. All specimens were individually collected under stones from dry and rocky slopes.

Distribution. Known only from the aforementioned localities in Georgia.

**Tegenaria hasperi* Chyzer, 1897

Figs 10–14

Tegenaria hasperi: Ponomarev and Shmatko 2023: 98, figs 3–4 (♀).
Tegenaria hasperi: Ponomarev et al. 2024: 277, figs 11–12 (♂).

Material examined. GEORGIA • 1♂, 1♀; Kvemo Kartli, Gardabani Mun., Kumisi Reservoir vicinity; 41.5893°N, 44.8202°E; 480 m a.s.l.; floodplain, under *Populus* sp. bark; leg. A. Seropian; 14 Apr. 2024; CaBOL-IDs 1009164, 1009167. • 2♂♂; Tbilisi, Lisi Lake vicinity; 41.7414°N, 44.7337°E; 630 m a.s.l.; steppe, under stones and on rocky outcrops; leg. G. Makharadze; 8 Jun. 2025; CaBOL-IDs 1039379, 1039380.

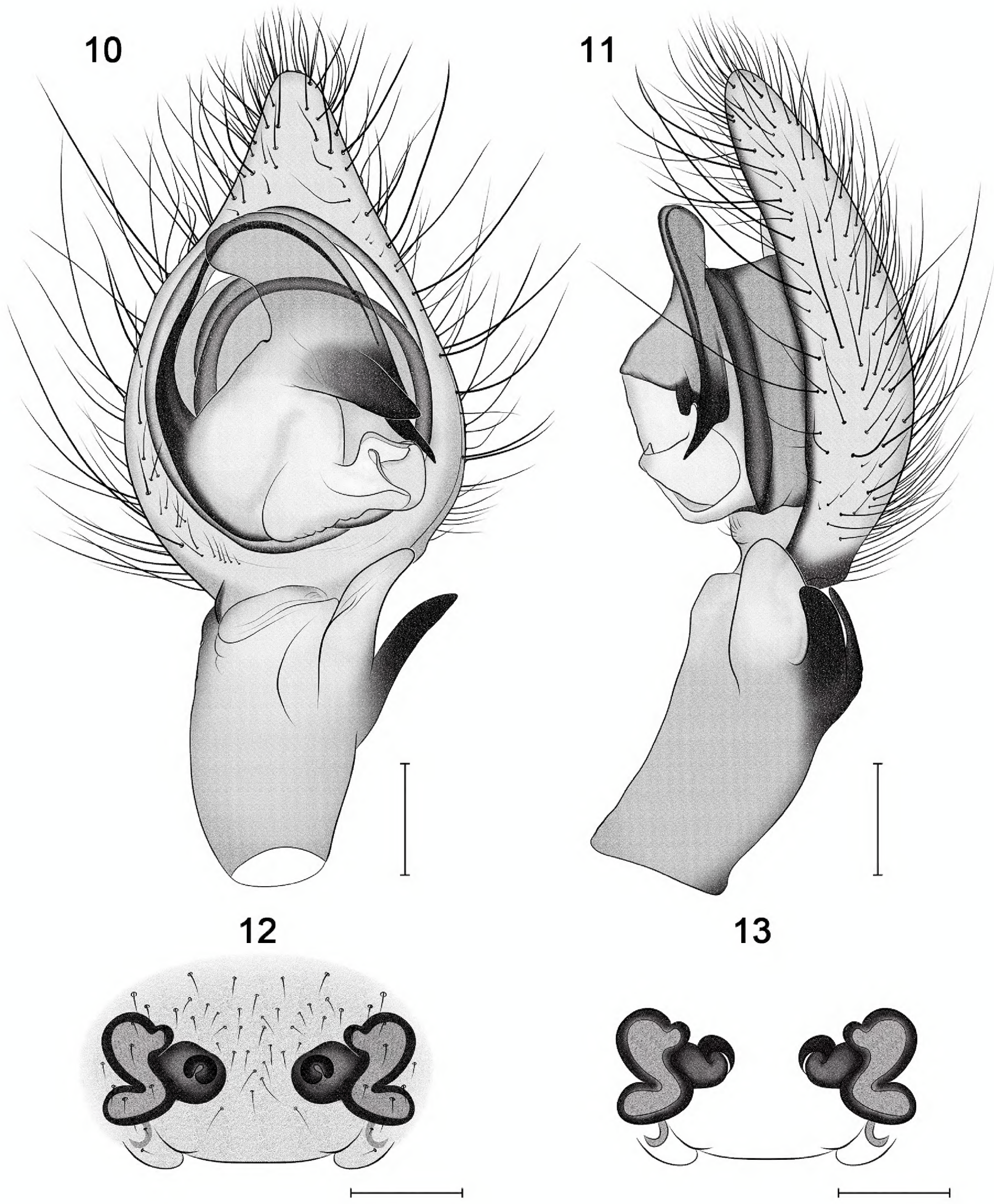

Figure 10–13. *Tegenaria hasperi* (**10**: male, left palp, ventral view; **11**: ditto, retrolateral view; **12**: female, epigyne, ventral view; **13**: endogyne, dorsal view). Scale bars: 0.2 mm

Remarks. Subadult specimens (CaBOL-IDs 1009164 and 1009167) were captive-reared on 2 and 22 of May 2024, respectively.

Comments. This species is distributed from France east to Dagestan (Nentwig et al. 2025; WSC 2025). In the region, it was previously reported from Krasnodar Kray (Russia) and Dagestan (Ponomarev et al. 2024). It is the first record of *T. hasperi* in Georgia and S Caucasus.

Figure 14. *Tegenaria hasperi*, habitus of live female.

***Tegenaria pseudolyncea* (Guseinov, Marusik & Koponen, 2005)**
Figs 15–17

Malthonica pseudolyncea: Guseinov et al. 2005: 167, figs 53–56 (♂).
Tegenaria pseudolyncea: Ponomarev et al. 2024: 283, figs 44–46 (♂).

Material exemined. GEORGIA • 1♂; Guria, Ozurgeti Mun., Gaghma Dvabzu Vill.; 41.9565°N, 42.0593°E; 120 m a.s.l.; under construction material; leg. G. Makharadze; 7 Sep. 2024.

Comments. This species is recorded in Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey (Nentwig et al. 2025; WSC 2025). It was previously reported in Georgia from the Samachablo and Imereti regions (Ponomarev et al. 2024). It is the first record of *T. pseudolyncea* in the region of Guria.

Family Gnaphosidae Banks, 1892

Genus *Echemus* Simon, 1878

Comments. *Echemus* comprises 23 species of light-coloured, small-sized gnaphosid spiders (WSC 2025). In the Caucasus, only *E. angustifrons* (Westring, 1861) was previously recorded (Nentwig 2025; Otto 2022).

****Echemus levyi* Kovblyuk & Seyyar, 2009**
Figs 18–19

Echemus levyi: Chatzaki and Van Keer 2019: 440, figs 15–16, 19–20 (♀).
Echemus levyi: Bosmans and Gavalas 2023: 23, figs 10E-G (♀).

Material examined. GEORGIA • 1♀; Tbilisi, Dighomi massive; 41.7574°N, 44.7788°E; 428 m a.s.l.; in appartment; leg. A. Seropian; 8 Jun. 2025; CaBOL-ID 1039390. • 1♀; Idem; 8 Aug. 2025; CaBOL-ID 1039455. • 1♂; Tbilisi, Vake;

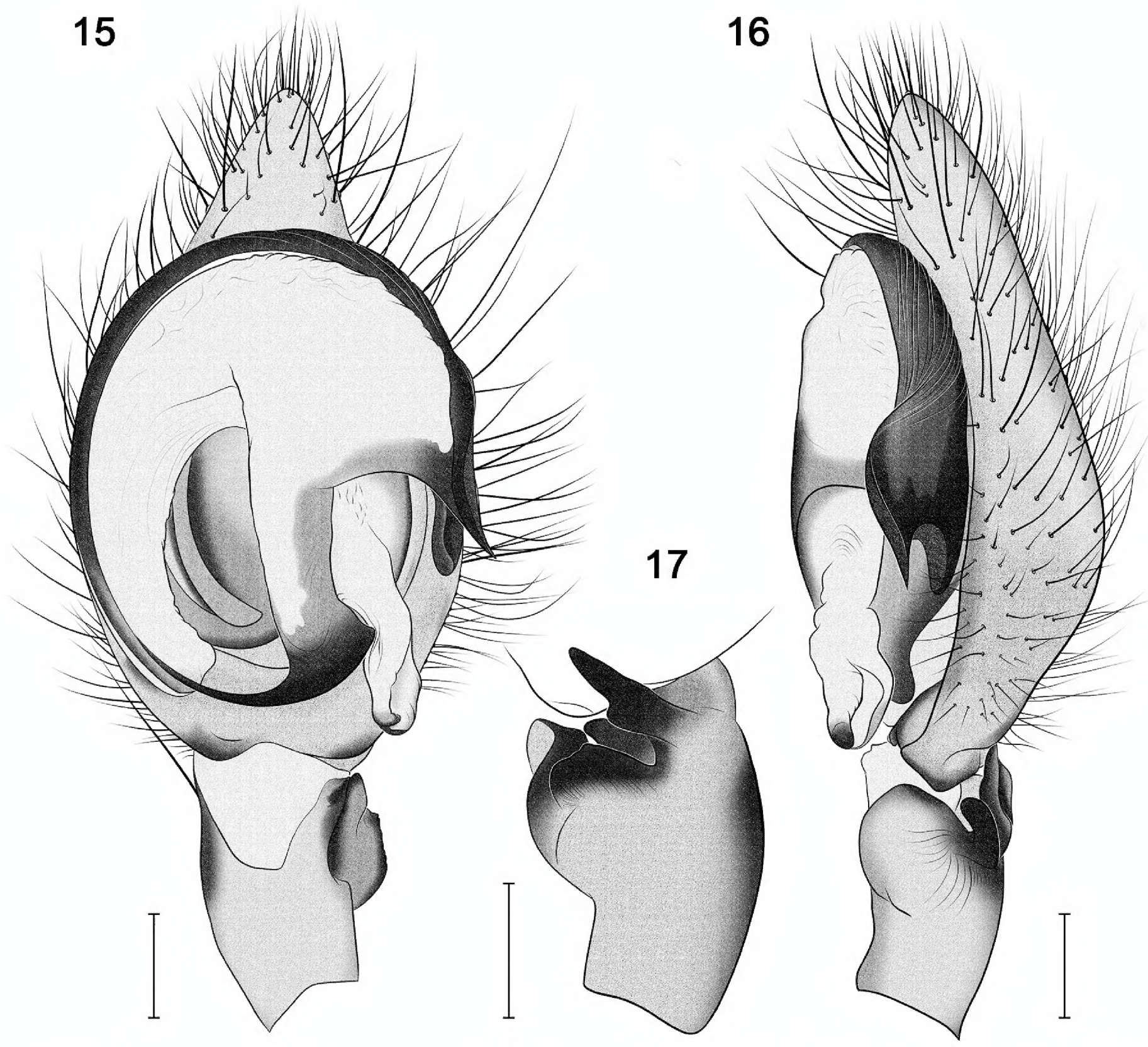

Figure 15–17. *Tegenaria pseudolyncea*, male (**15**: left palp, ventral view; **16**: ditto, retrolateral view; **17**: RTA, dorsal view). Scale bars: 0.2 mm. Abbreviations.

41.7125°N, 44.7484°E; 495 m a.s.l.; building wall; leg. A. Seropian; 9 Jul. 2025; CaBOL-ID 1039454.

Comments. This species was previously recorded in Cyprus, Greece, and Central Turkey (Nentwig et al. 2025; WSC 2025). It is the first record of this species in the Caucasus region and the northern-most one.

Genus *Marinarozelotes* Ponomarev, 2020

Comments. See Seropian et al. 2024c.

***Marinarozelotes malkini* (Platnick & Murphy, 1984)**
Figs 20–21

Trachyzelotes malkini: Platnick and Murphy 1984: 22, figs 51–54 (♂♀).
Marinarozelotes malkini: Ponomarev and Shmatko 2020: 135, figs 14–15, 19, 25–26, 43–44 (♂♀).

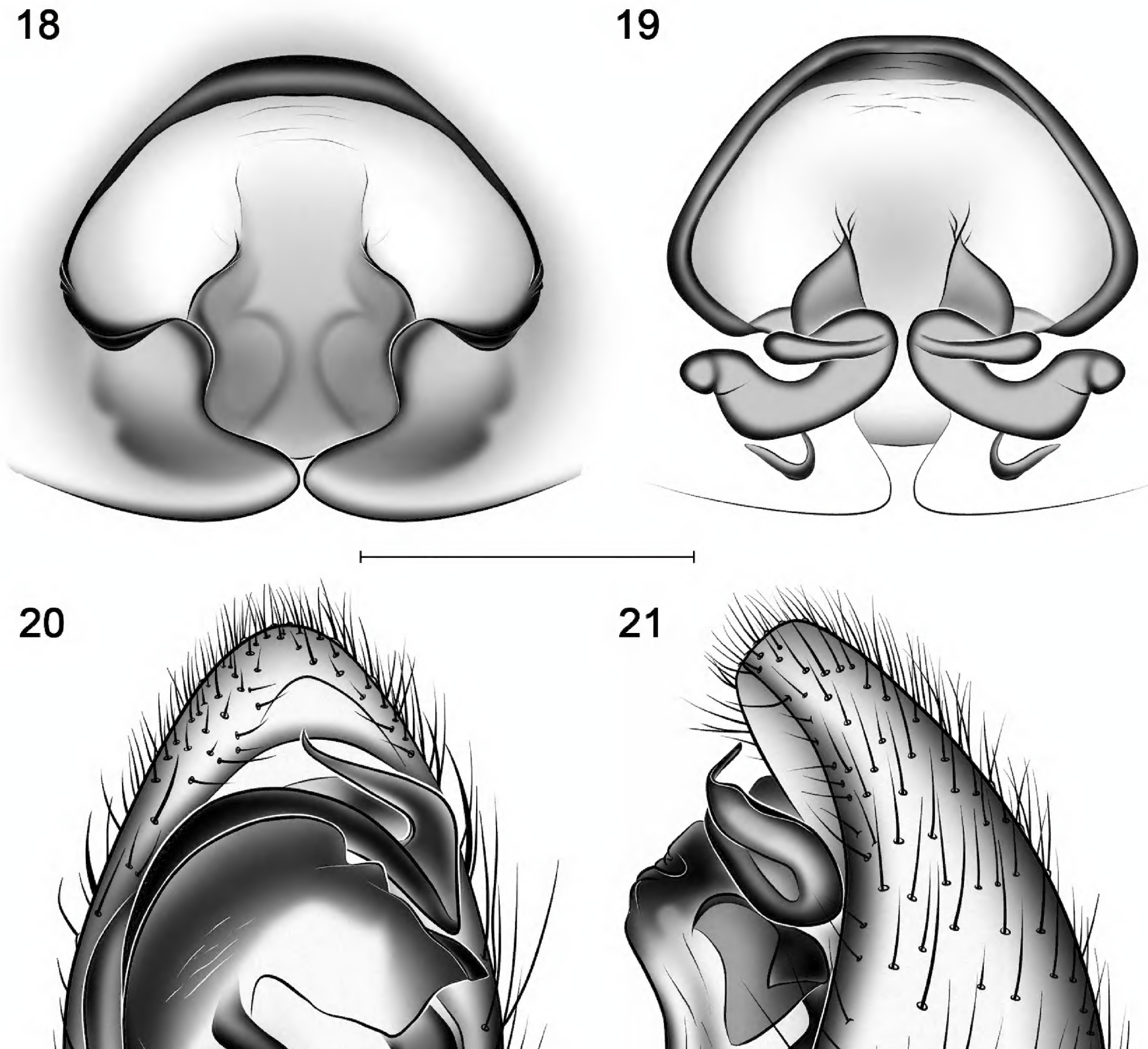

Figure 18–21. *Echemus levyi*, female (**18**: epigyne, ventral view; **19**: endogyne, dorsal view). *Marinarozelotes malkini*, male (**20**: left palp, ventral view; **21**: ditto, retrolateral view). Scale bars: 0.2 mm.

Materials examined. GEORGIA • 2♂♂, 4♀♀; Tbilisi, Lisi Lake vicinity; 41.7489°N, 44.7326°E; 632 m a.s.l.; steppe, under stones; leg. G. Makharadze; 8 Jun. 2025; CaBOL-IDs 1039377, 1039378, 1039373, 1039374, 1039375, 1039376. • 1♂, 2♀♀; Kvemo Kartli, Rustavi Car Market; 41.5778°N, 44.9422°E; 333 m a.s.l.; steppe, under stones; leg. G. Makharadze; 14 Jun. 2025.

Comments. This species is distributed from the E Mediterranean east to W Kazakhstan (Nentwig et al. 2025). In the Caucasus region, it was mainly recorded in N Caucasus with a single report from S Caucasus in the Samachablo region of Georgia (Ponomarev and Shmatko 2020). It is the second and the southernmost record of *M. malkini* in the S Caucasus.

Family Linyphiidae Blackwall, 1859

*Genus *Archaraeoncus* Tanasevitch, 1987

******Archaraeoncus prospiciens* (Thorell, 1875)**

Figs 22–26

Archaraeoncus prospiciens: Tanasevitch 1987: 338, figs 70–73 (♂).
Archaraeoncus prospiciens: Tanasevitch 2008: 476, figs 13–17 (♂).

Material examined. GEORGIA • 3♂♂; Kakheti, Sagarejo Mun., Udabno Vill. vicinity; 41.5465°N, 45.3347°E; 515 m a.s.l.; steppe, vegetation; leg. L. Ninua; 22 Nov. 2024; CaBOL-IDs 1007297, 1007298, 10072979.

Comments. This species is distributed from Bulgaria east to NW China (Xinjiang) (Nentwig et al. 2025; WSC 2025). In the Caucasus, it was previously reported from Azerbaijan and North Ossetia (Ponomarev et al. 2021). It is the first record of the genus in Georgia.

*Genus *Trichoncoides* Denis, 1950

Comments. *Trichoncoides* is a small genus of Erigoninae Simon, 1884 spiders, with only three valid species restricted to the Palaearctic (WSC 2025). In the Caucasus, a single and the most widespread species, *T. piscator* (Simon, 1884), was previously reported (Otto 2022).

******Trichoncoides piscator* (Simon, 1884)**

Figs 27–31

Trichoncoides piscator: Bosmans 2007: 140, figs 159–161 (♂).
Trichoncoides piscator: Gnelitsa 2009: 201, figs 7a–c, f (♂).

Material examined. GEORGIA • 1♂; Kakheti, Sagarejo Mun., Udabno vill. vicinity; 41.5465°N, 45.3347°E; 515 m a.s.l.; steppe, vegetation; leg. L. Ninua; 22 Nov. 2024; CaBOL-ID 1007296.

Comments. This species has a European-Ancient Mediterranean distribution range (Nentwig et al. 2025; WSC 2025). In the Caucasus, it was previously reported from Azerbaijan and Stavropol Kray (Russia) (Otto 2022). It is the first record of *Trichoncoides* in Georgia.

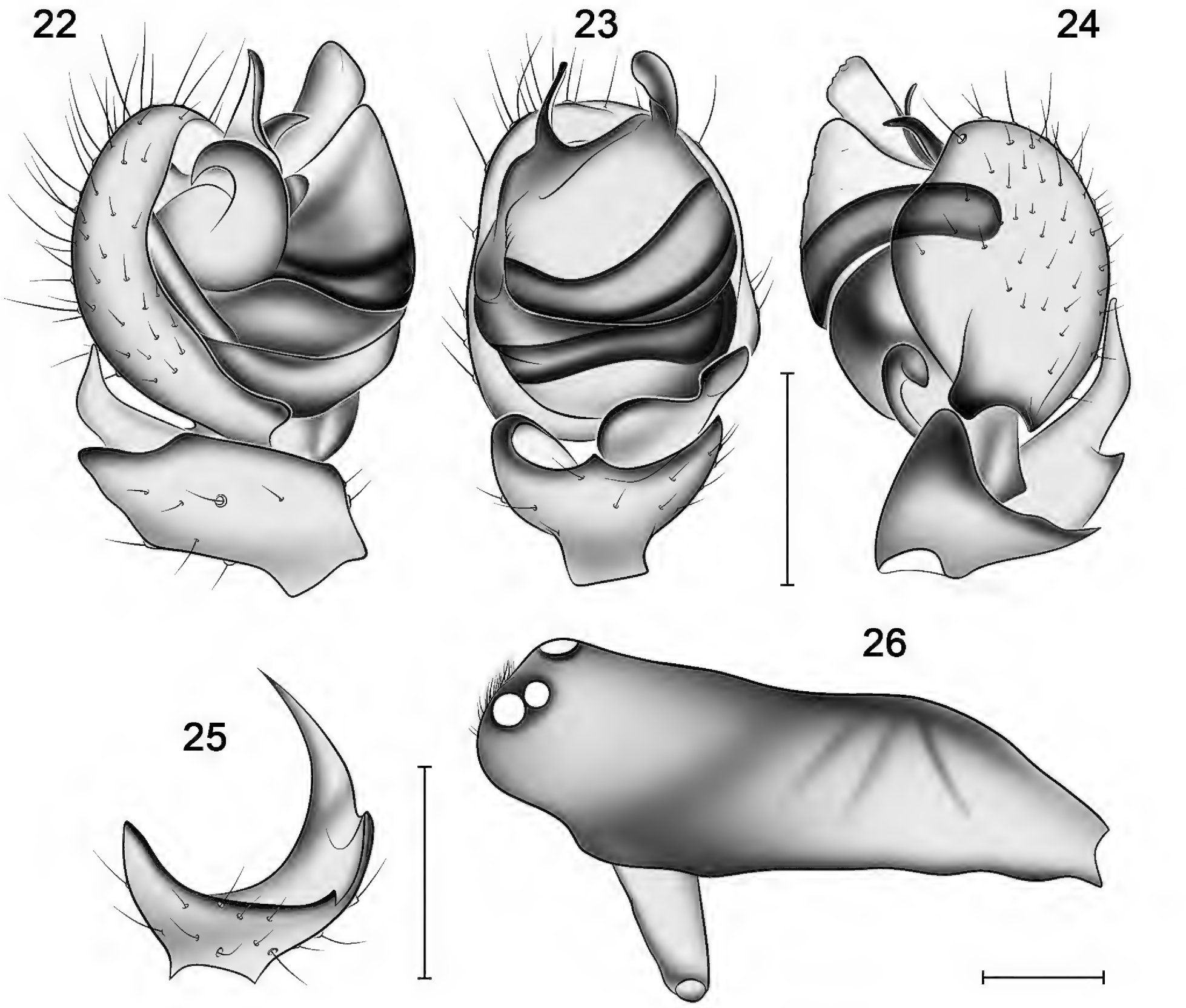

Figure 22–26. *Archaraeoncus prospiciens*, male (**22**: left palp, prolateral view; **23**: ditto, ventral view; **24**: ditto, retrolateral view; **25**: palpal tibia, dorsal view; **26**: prosoma, lateral view). Scale bars: 0.5 mm (23–25); 0.2 mm (26).

Family Lycosidae Sundevall, 1833

Genus *Aulonia* C. L. Koch, 1847

Comments. *Aulonia* is a very small genus of small-sized wolf-spiders, currently comprising only two species distributed exclusively in the Western Palaearctic. Both species were previously reported from the Caucasus, with only *A. albimana* recorded in Georgia (Nentwig et al. 2025; WSC 2025).

**Aulonia kratochvili* Dunin, Buchar & Absolon, 1986

Figs 32–35

Aulonia kratochvili Dunin et al. 1986: 28, figs 1–7 (♂♀).

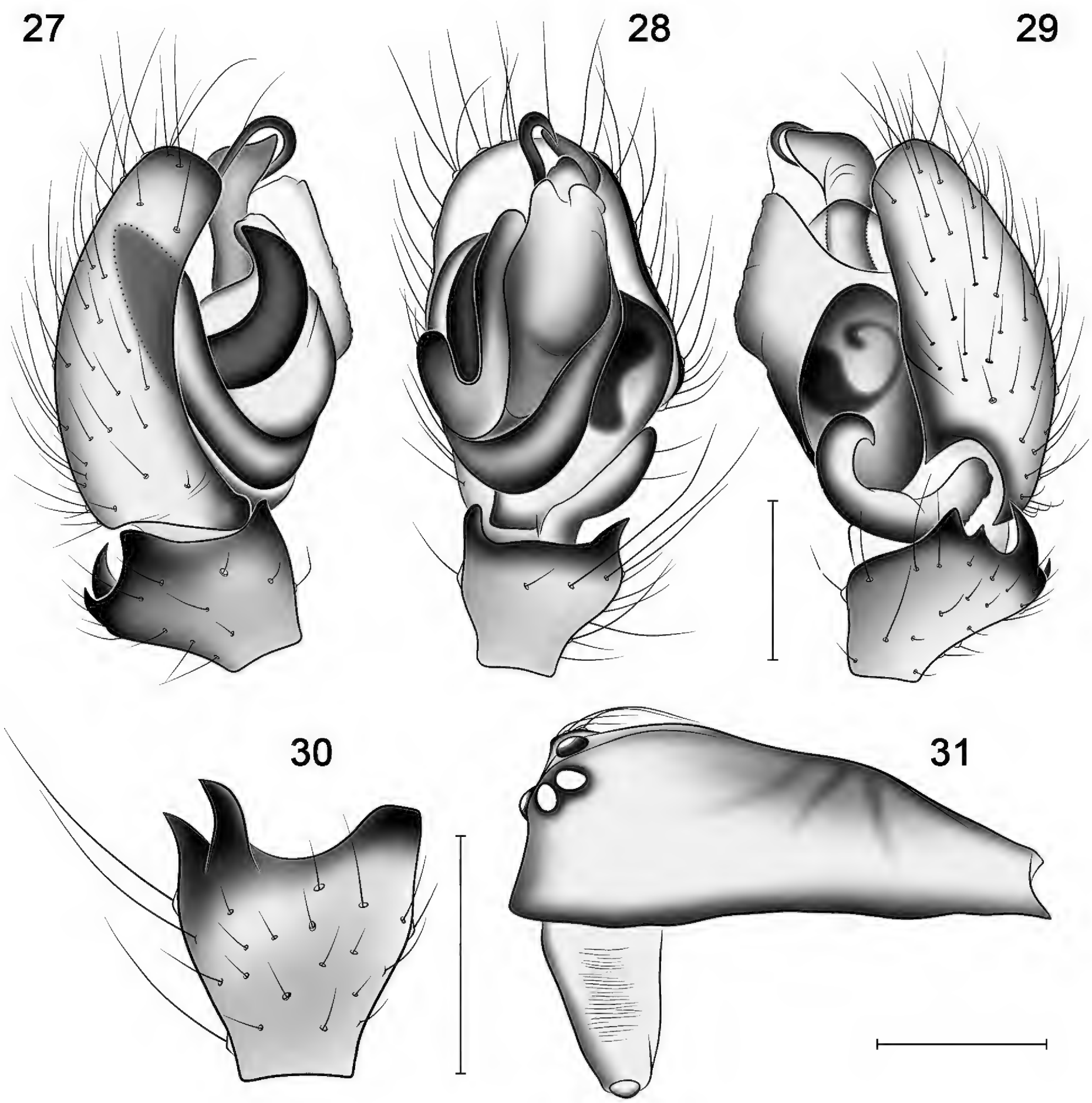

Figure 27–31. *Trichoncoides piscator*, male (**27**: left palp, prolateral view; **28**: ditto, ventral view; **29**: ditto, retrolateral view; **30**: palpal tibia, dorsal view; **31**: prosoma, lateral view). Scale bars: 0.1 mm (27–30); 0.2 mm (31).

Material examined. GEORGIA • 1 ♂; Kakheti, Sagarejo Mun., Badiauri vill. vicinity; 41.6159°N, 45.5444°E; 450 m a.s.l.; Iori River floodplain, leg. I. Rostiashvili, G. Rostomashvili, and T. Shengelidze; 21 April 2024; CaBOL-ID 1037500. • 2 ♀♀; Idem; 23 May 2024.

Comments. This species is distributed from Greece to western Turkmenistan (Nentwig et al. 2025; WSC 2025). In the Caucasus, it was previously reported from Azerbaijan (Otto 2022). It is the first record of *A. kratochvili* in Georgia and the northernmost of its distribution range.

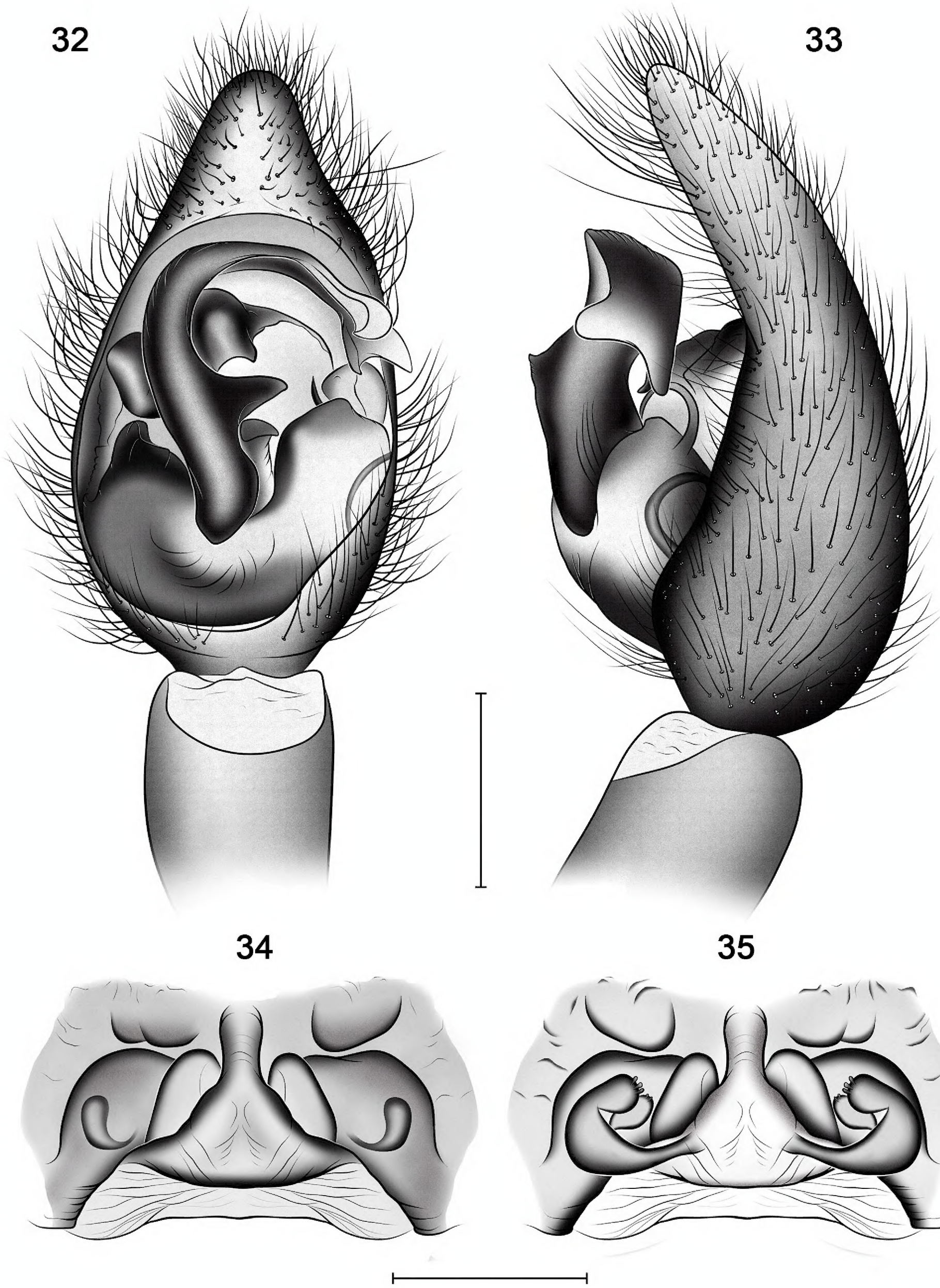

Figure 32–35. *Aulonia kratochvili*, (**32**: male, left palp, ventral view; **33**: ditto, retrolateral view; **34**: female, epigyne, ventral view; **35**: ditto, endogyne, dorsa viewl). Scale bars: 0.5 mm.

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Additional information

Conflict of interest

The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

Ethical statement

No ethical statement was reported.

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Author contributions

Conceptualisation, identification, data curation, original draft writing, visualisation: AS. Sampling: AS, LN, IR, NB, GM.

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Data availability

All of the data that support the findings of this study are available in the main text or Supplementary Information.

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